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1ST GHANA NATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR TRADITIONAL PRIESTS HELD IN KUMASI

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A national gathering of traditional priests dubbed the 'KUM-ASE Conversation 2014' has been held yesterday 07/29/14 at the plush Golden Tulip Hotel-Kumasi City in the Ashanti region.

The conference which was organized by the US based International Center for African Culture & Arts, (ICACA) and the Centre for Human Development & Social Change, Ghana attracted many important public cultural, human rights and religious personalities.

The theme for the conference was 'Traditional Culture, Diversity and Development (Issues, Needs and Potentials). Speakers for the conference included the Asantehene's Sumankwahene Baffour Kogyan, Dr. Francis Adjei, the Ashanti regional director of the Center for National Culture, Mr. Willie Klutse, the Adansi-North director of NCCE, some regional delegates from the Ashanti regional NCCE office led by Mr. Asamoah Badu; Mr. Dag Kofi Akyeampong, the Ghana director of the International Center for African Culture and Arts, Ms. Felicia Okai, the director of the Centre for Human Development and Social Change, Mr. Harold Akyeampong, the international relations director of the International Center for African Culture & Arts and the president of the Ghana chapter of the Percussive Arts Society, Nana Obuotabiri, the chief priest at the famous Koforidua Obuotabiri shrine; Nana Kwame Subun, the director of African Diaspora Hospital and chief priest of the Nana Kuri Shrine in Kumasi and the chairman for the occasion, Nana Abass, the chairman of the Asanteman Komfo Anokye Korye Kuo.

In his speech, Mr. Harold Akyeampong, who was the conference coordinator explained the need for the coming together of the priests to be empowered so that they can function effectively and efficiently.

On his part Mr. Willie Klutse educated the nananom on Ghana's constitution and the rights and responsibilities of the traditional priest.

Mr. Asamoah Badu the director of programmes of the Ashanti regional NCCE office also educated the participants on the importance of the priesthood and the need for them to be united so that they can offer collective support.

Mr. Dag Kofi Akyeampong, spoke on the importance of tradition, virtues and national development. He challenged all Ghanaians to be honest and to do their work with clean and responsible honesty.

Nana Kwame Subun on his part thanked all the participants for their participation and appealed to them to organize community and regional groups to sustain the national efforts.

Dr. Francis Adjei, the regional director of Centre for National Culture, educated the participants on the importance of traditional culture and national development. He spoke about the role of the great ancestors and the need for the nananom to continue the traditions.

Ms. Felicia Okai, the CHDSC director also educated the participants on the role of her organization and its collaborative efforts to help address national challenges especially in the area of human development.

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"A day is coming, tortoise will fly."

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During her speech, Nana Obuotabiri asked questions and threw challenge to the participants to use truth, honesty and responsibility as their guiding principles in their work. She condemned the unguarded sensitive statements that many traditional priests are making on radio with selfish intents. She said, any irresponsible statement by any priest goes to tarnish the image of the priesthood.

Nana Abass, who was the chairman for the occasion congratulated the participants for their good works and he appealed to them to continue to be guarded by honesty. He also advised the participants to respect the rights of other religious groups and to show tolerance.

On his part, Nana Nsumankwahene thanked the organizers, the participants and everybody for attending such an important cultural programme. He promised that he would do all he can to support the efforts and appealed to all participants to remain active in their respective community and national groups.

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